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Summary

The present report highlights a select number of initiatives and activities undertaken by the United Nations Development Programme in 2005 as they relate to the recommendations provided by the Permanent Forum on Indigenous Issues.

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I. Policy framework

1. The mandate, development cooperation processes and agreements of the United Nations Development Programme (UNDP) and the aspirations of indigenous peoples guide the Programme's engagement with indigenous peoples and their organizations. In the context of the International Decade of the World's Indigenous People (1995-2004), and building on previous initiatives, in August 2001 UNDP issued a policy guidance note entitled *"UNDP and indigenous peoples: a policy of engagement"*. The objective of the policy note was to provide UNDP staff with a framework to guide their work in building sustainable partnerships with indigenous peoples. Rooted in the goals and targets set by world leaders at the Millennium Summit in September 2000, it is underpinned by the international human rights framework and a full recognition of the vital role of indigenous peoples in, and contribution to, development.

2. In May 2000, UNDP established a Civil Society Organizations Advisory Committee composed of 14 civil society leaders who provide strategic advice to the Administrator and senior management on key policy advocacy initiatives. The Committee, which includes the chair of the Permanent Forum, has been a vehicle to bring the concerns of indigenous peoples to the attention of the UNDP Administrator and senior management. Similar advisory committees have been established at the national level in Botswana and Brazil, where indigenous peoples' issues have also been addressed.

II. National human development reports

3. National human development reports are an important tool for generating debate on issues of concern to indigenous peoples. Such policy advocacy documents, supported by UNDP, take stock of human development at the country level and aim to stimulate public debate and political attention to pressing development priorities.

4. In some countries, such as Chile and Mexico, the human development index has been used specifically to generate disaggregated statistical information on indigenous peoples, in Chile on the Mapuche population and in Mexico on indigenous populations in the entire country. In 2003, Chile produced a human development index for the Mapuche population in the region of Araucania. In 2005, the Mexico country office partnered with the National Commission for the Development of Indigenous Peoples in the development of the human development index for indigenous peoples. In some cases, the indicators have been adapted to reflect local realities, such as life expectancy in the case of Chile. The 2006 Guatemala national human development report is focusing on cultural diversity and will contain a wide selection of data on indigenous peoples.

III. Global programmes

5. The Human Rights Strengthening Programme (HURIST), a joint programme of UNDP and the Office of the United Nations High Commissioner for Human Rights, aims at integrating human rights in development by building the capacity of United Nations country offices, preparing methodologies and toolkits on human

rights and through documenting and disseminating good practices in the application of those rights in development. HURIST supports implementation of the UNDP policy on human rights as presented in the policy document entitled "Integrating human rights with sustainable human development" (1998) by supporting the development of national capacity for the promotion and protection of human rights and the application of a human rights based approach to development programming.

6. In 2002, HURIST incorporated an indigenous peoples' component aimed at enabling implementation of the UNDP policy of engagement with indigenous peoples (2001) and creating a mechanism for dialogue at the national level to ensure the participation of indigenous peoples in UNDP activities at both the policy and programme levels.

7. In 2004, HURIST launched two pilot projects in Ecuador (March) and Kenya (June). Support is currently being given to phase two of HURIST Ecuador, which focuses on project development. The four goals of phase two of HURIST Ecuador are:

(a) To strengthen the ombudsman's office on indigenous peoples' issues;

(b) To strengthen existing dialogue mechanisms at the national level and create new ones that focus on the implementation of human rights through the establishment of a national indigenous peoples forum;

(c) To disseminate interculturalism and human rights in the primary education curricula of the National Office of Intercultural and Bilingual Education;

(d) To promote attention to indigenous peoples' rights in international cooperation.

8. Among the key outputs of the HURIST initiative in Kenya was the facilitation of a frank dialogue between members of Parliament and indigenous representatives and the establishment of an advisory mechanism on indigenous issues known as the United Nations Indigenous Peoples' Advisory Committee of Kenya (UNIPACK). HURIST Kenya has received additional funding for 2006 to carry out its initiative. The interim committee has contributed to the terms of reference for the permanent UNIPACK (to be put in place in 2006) and a framework for membership. The committee will:

(a) Establish a mechanism for dialogue and information-sharing among indigenous peoples, the United Nations system/UNDP and relevant national actors, such as Government authorities and parliamentarians;

(b) Provide strategic guidance on indigenous peoples' concerns, principles and perspectives for UNDP country programming and related policy initiatives supported by UNDP and the United Nations system;

(c) Promote stakeholder dialogues and initiatives with state and non-state actors, including representatives from indigenous peoples' organizations and civil society organizations, that strengthen networks and raise awareness about influencing policy;

(d) Provide space for mutual learning and understanding between indigenous peoples and UNDP/United Nations staff.

9. Based on the successes of the HURIST programme thus far, the Catalan Agency for Development Cooperation is providing support to the second phase of the Ecuador project and to two additional projects in Guatemala and Bolivia. The activities will take place during 2006.

IV. Regional programmes

10. UNDP is currently implementing the $2 million regional initiative on strengthening policy dialogue on indigenous, highland and tribal peoples' rights and development. The project aims to enhance intercountry sharing of experiences on priority issues, particularly with regard to reducing the incidence of poverty among indigenous peoples. It aims to build capacity among all stakeholders and strengthen information networks and knowledge management systems, particularly among indigenous peoples, to support their full and effective participation in policy dialogue at all levels. The project is being led from Thailand and the core participating countries include Cambodia, Indonesia, the Philippines, Thailand and Viet Nam. Some of the intended outputs include needs assessments, capacity-building initiatives such as training and materials for indigenous peoples and government at the national level, indigenous advisory mechanisms, pilot projects and learning networks at the national and regional levels. The regional initiative also pays particular attention to the concerns and needs of indigenous women, especially in the area of indigenous knowledge and sustainable resource management.

11. The initiative has partnered or led activities in strengthening indigenous peoples' organizations and movements in the Asia-Pacific region in a range of key thematic areas during 2005, working with Governments, indigenous peoples organizations and UNDP country offices.

12. Work undertaken in the programme is broadly divided into the following key thematic areas: natural resource management and land; law and policy frameworks; capacity development and training; and gender. In 2005, more than 40 projects and programmes covering all those areas were led or partnered in by the regional initiative. Key initiatives include studies on access to formal and informal justice systems; studies on local governance systems and their relevance to and inclusion of indigenous peoples; building the capacity of women, youth leaders and communities affected by development policies and projects. The regional initiative also provided advice to the Governments of both Cambodia and Indonesia to analysis and reform of existing policies on indigenous peoples, and in initiating, with the Government of Viet Nam, a review of existing land tenure arrangements affecting indigenous peoples.

13. The Tebtebba Foundation implemented a data disaggregation project that seeks to address the lack of accurate information-gathering vis-a-vis indigenous peoples. The Foundation is working with the National Statistics Office of the Philippines to determine ways in which disaggregation of data can be institutionalized, and preliminary surveying is taking place in three provinces.

V. Country programmes

14. In 2004, the Guatemala civil society participation programme took on board the organization Tob'nel Tinamit-Defensa Legal Indígena. One objective of the project was to provide a follow-up report on the implementation of the recommendations made by the Special Rapporteur of the Commission on Human Rights on the situation of the human rights and fundamental freedoms of indigenous people. In late October 2005, the first alternative Mayan observation report was presented as a response to the recommendations of the Special Rapporteur. A total of 72 organizations have participated in the Mayan observation initiative, and the report has been validated by 15 governmental and non-governmental organizations.

15. In Suriname, a project scheduled to start in 2006 aims at empowering indigenous and tribal authorities to fully participate in a national land rights dialogue. It is the first project of its kind.

16. In Panama, a local management centre was established and is fully operating in collaboration with traditional indigenous authorities and local governments in el Darién. Income-generating activities and capacity development for local sustainable economies, developed with the indigenous and Afro-descendant communities, are being implemented. The centre will be able to mobilize resources at both the national and international levels for various projects and to implement income-generating and capacity development activities using the learning-by-doing methodology.

VI. Global Environment Facility small grants programme

17. Since 1992, the Global Environment Facility (GEF) small grants programme has promoted grass-roots action to address global environmental concerns. The small grants programme allocates grants of up to $50,000 — with an average grant size of $20,000 — directly to non-governmental, community-based organizations and indigenous peoples' organizations to support their efforts to protect the environment while generating sustainable livelihoods. The programme is a corporate initiative of GEF, and is implemented by UNDP on behalf of the three implementing agencies of GEF, which include UNDP, the United Nations Environment Programme and the World Bank. The programme currently operates through a decentralized management system in 95 developing countries in Africa, the Middle East, Asia and the Pacific, the Commonwealth of Independent States and Latin America and the Caribbean.

18. Country-level activities are guided by national steering committees made up of a majority of representatives from national non-governmental organizations, academia, co-funding donors, United Nations agencies, the private sector and indigenous peoples' representatives.

Guatemala

19. Since its inception in 1997, the national steering committee of the small grants programme, which approves all grants in Guatemala, has sought to work in the south-western region of the country as priority geographic area owing to the high levels of human threats to globally significant biodiversity and international watersheds. The national steering committees noted that traditional funding sources

and donors had not allowed indigenous Mayan peoples in the south-west to participate in development projects owing largely to educational barriers and high levels of ethnic and linguistic diversity of the Mayan groups. The GEF small grants country programme also observed that local intermediaries often followed their own agendas on project development while working with indigenous peoples. As a result, there were few opportunities for indigenous people to express their own needs and environmental interests. The national strategic framework for small grants programme was reviewed and priority was placed on the following aspects:

(a) Priority funding should be targeted at communities in extreme poverty and exclusion (indigenous peoples and women's groups);

(b) Specific procedures and proposal formats should be developed to facilitate access for those groups.

20. According to that strategic framework, a survey was conducted to identify communities that were among the poorest of the poor as a priority population based on UNDP national human development reports. The disaggregated survey results identified 18 municipal provinces, 6 of which were selected according to criteria of the national steering committees. Once the priority municipal provinces were selected, community-based organizations were proactively contacted by the small grants programme, and special project formats and training materials in the form of flip charts were designed and developed.

21. A training workshop was subsequently held and 32 indigenous leaders (31 women and 1 man) were trained as "voluntary promoters" of participatory diagnostics in the area of environmental community problems, gender work issues, project co-financing, project planning and design, budget development, and monitoring and evaluation. Once trained, the indigenous promoters returned to their respective communities to develop a project proposal based on participatory means and a planning grant to facilitate community consultations. Community field visits were also made by the national coordinator of the GEF small grants programme, members of the national steering committees and United Nations Volunteers to accompany the project development process.

22. The lessons learned from the indigenous community promoters were that:

(a) Most indigenous promoters were efficient and effective in project proposal development, using their own language and respecting local traditions;

(b) Indigenous promoters facilitated the expression of communities' interests and priority environmental problems;

(c) Translation into local Mayan languages was provided during training sessions to assure full understanding of small grants programme procedures;

(d) Childcare during workshops ensured the full participation of women;

(e) Project co-financing and community participation was achieved owing mainly to the innovative design of the innovative flip chart project formats;

(f) Following the success of that approach, the National steering committee of the GEF small grants programme included three new members from local indigenous populations to participate in the approval of grants for other indigenous beneficiaries.

23. In addition, the Global Environment Facility small grants programme in partnership with the Civil Society Organizations Division, has been working to facilitate indigenous peoples' access to grants through innovative methods, such as participatory video-making. Two consultative workshops were held in 2004 and 2005. In 2006, the Global Environment Facility small grants programme, Civil Society Organizations Division and HURIST will commission a how to handbook on participatory video-making.

VII. Millennium Development Goals

24. Over the past four years, UNDP has engaged in raising awareness of the Millennium Development Goals among indigenous peoples and their organizations at various international forums.

25. UNDP seeks to collaborate with indigenous peoples and their organizations in achieving the Goals, and recognizes that greater efforts are needed to include the participation of indigenous peoples' organizations in the development of the Millennium Development Goals country reports that monitor the progress of the goals. Greater coordination between indigenous peoples' organizations and the Millennium campaign is also needed; nevertheless, the first steps have been taken.

26. UNDP builds the capacity of communities to localize the Millennium Development Goals by providing small grants to community-oriented sustainable development projects and through community-to-community learning exchange facilities that encourage the sharing of knowledge and best practices among community-based organizations. In addition, community dialogue spaces profile communities during global conferences and highlight the contribution of communities, especially indigenous peoples, in achieving the Millennium Development Goals. Such dialogue spaces bring together representatives of communities and indigenous peoples with international Government and civil society organizations leaders for a frank exchange on how to develop an enabling environment for community participation in regional development.

27. UNDP welcomes the opportunity to work with the Forum in ensuring greater engagement of indigenous peoples in the Millennium Development Goals process so as to build on opportunities and better address the challenges.

28. Co-organized with Equator Initiative, the Civil Society Organizations Division and other partners, the Community Commons, a civil society organizations forum, was held from 16 to 18 June 2005 in New York. The forum brought together 150 representatives from community-based and indigenous peoples' organizations to prepare a community position to the issues raised by the Secretary-General in his report entitled "In larger freedom: towards development, security and human rights for all" (A/59/2005) and to ensure that civil society and community-based organizations could present a collective agenda to the General Assembly during its hearings with civil society in June.

29. The Asia and Pacific Regional Indigenous Peoples' Programme in south-east Asia has commissioned a report on the obstacles and barriers to greater inclusion of indigenous peoples in the Millennium Development Goals and will continue to closely monitor the national policy frameworks for achieving the Goals to review inclusion or marginalization of indigenous peoples.

30. The following are publications related to the Millennium Development Goals:

(a) Civil society organizations' perspectives on the Millennium Development Goals (2005): a compilation that features the viewpoints of some of the members of the Civil Society Organizations Advisory Committee and focuses on issues of gender, environment trade and indigenous peoples;

(b) Millennium Development Goals and ethnicity (2005): in response to the Secretary-General's visit to the Andean region in 2003 and his alarm that the Millennium Development Goals would not be achieved if indigenous peoples were not targeted, UNDP, in partnership with the Inter-American Development Bank, the World Bank and the Economic Commission for Latin America and the Caribbean, commissioned this study which aimed at highlighting key issues of concern within Goals 1 to 3 on poverty, gender and education.